



# Diocese of Wagga Wagga Catholic Schools Office



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Dear Parents,

## RE: Protected Industrial Action

I write to keep you fully informed about the protected industrial action that the Independent Education Union (the Union) has organised at your school in the coming weeks.

### What will happen?

The Union proposes that its members take the following forms of protected industrial action at your school:

- Work stoppages at specific times – **Monday 6 November 2017 up until 12.30pm**
- Provide information to parents or other community members about the work stoppages, as well as information about the Union's industrial campaign
- Wear the Union's campaign badges

### Student safety and wellbeing assured

Firstly let me say that in the unfortunate event of any stop work action at your school, I can assure you that adequate supervision will be provided for the duration of the stoppages. Principals at some schools may implement alternative arrangements, but the safety and wellbeing of our students is our number one priority.

### Ongoing discussions about a new Enterprise Agreement

Catholic schools and the Union are currently involved in discussions over a new Enterprise Agreement ('EA'). Whilst the Catholic Schools Office is respectful of employees exercising their industrial rights, we do question the need for industrial action at this time.

Our school system works effectively and diligently to ensure that all staff are treated with dignity, respect and are fully rewarded. The new EA will be voted on soon and includes backdated pay increases and expanded opportunities for salary progression.

### Why is the Union proposing protected industrial action?

The Union continues to have an issue with the disputes resolution clause and thinks it should be changed. We disagree, and here's why:

- It's the very same clause that's in the existing EA;
- Over the last seven years it's successfully resolved every dispute that's been notified, proving its effectiveness;
- It is the same clause the IEU recently endorsed for 450 private schools;
- There is no reason to think it won't continue to be just as effective for Catholic schools.

As you can see, the current clause works well and therefore does not need to be changed. However, if for some reason it does stop working throughout the life of this new EA, the Diocese will be happy to work the Union to find ways to improve it.

**We are committed to keeping you updated with the latest information.** If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards

Alan Bowyer  
Director of Schools